

by increasingly thick layers of critical dust. Nevertheless, this study is a valuable extension to many aspects of secular material studies in early modern literature, and one that maps many important directions for the future of materialist critical excavations.

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**David Womersley (ed.).** *Gulliver's Travels: The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jonathan Swift*, vol. 16. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, civ + 806 pp., £ 85.00.

David Womersley's edition takes us on an extended voyage of discovery through the textual archipelago of *Gulliver's Travels*. While the main island is constituted by the critical annotated edition of Swift's novel, this is surrounded by an encompassing critical apparatus including a chronology of Swift's life, the internal chronology of *Gulliver's Travels*, a detailed introduction as well as extensive long notes on selected topics (such as "Swift and Queen Anne", "Publick Good", "Plague", "Swift and the law", or "Science and vivisection") and several appendices which conclude this editorial exploration and provide a detailed map of a terrain that for a long time has been well travelled and yet insufficiently charted. Together, the various parts of the new Cambridge edition of *Gulliver's Travels* make up an invaluable guide for students and advanced researchers alike, providing insights into the political, cultural and personal background of the novel's composition, its textual history and various minutiae that one always wanted to know about but never knew where to look up.

For example, do you know what a 'Bristol barrel' is? This term is mentioned twice in *Gulliver's Travels*: First, when the Queen of Brobdingnag's spiteful dwarf shakes a crab-apple tree while Gulliver is passing underneath, and "a dozen Apples, each of them near as large as a *Bristol* barrel, came tumbling about my Ears" (163); and again in Part III when Gulliver learns that one of the savants of the Academy of Lagado receives a weekly allowance of "human Ordure, about the Bigness of a *Bristol* Barrel" (261) for his experiment "to reduce human Excrement to its original Food" (260). In the long note on the Bristol barrel we are introduced to the complex world of eighteenth-century measurements which is reminiscent of the calculation of currency in *Asterix in Britain*:

The capacity of the Bristol barrel is linked to the bushel “which we know is equal to four pecks, or eight gallons” (536), but then, the capacity of the bushel also varied and in fact, it is not quite clear whether it was a measure or a weight. Even if, after the perusal of the long note, we are not entirely sure how big the apples tumbling down on Gulliver really were, we are directed to other occurrences of the term in Swift’s correspondence which point us down further routes to Irish language use, Irish politics and Swift’s involvement therein. Taken in isolation, the editor’s note on the elusive Bristol barrel could read like a scrupulous, and slightly mad, philological exercise, if it were not taken up in the introduction where the relevant passages from *Gulliver’s Travels* are placed in the context of Swift’s political writings, especially *The Drapier’s Letters* (1724) in which he attacks the introduction of debased copper coinage in Ireland, coins that were “manufactured in Bristol before being transported to Ireland in barrels” (lv). In consequence, “for Swift the barrel is an instrument whereby the English tried to oppress the Irish; and this was likely to be particularly true of barrels coming from Bristol” (lv). As the short footnotes accompanying the main text, the explanatory long notes and the introduction are read together, the seemingly trivial philological exploration of an obscure term unfolds into an illuminating reading of cross-references within Swift’s works that shows how his critique of English policy towards Ireland resonated through and became recorded in his greatest fictional work.

The editor’s introduction situates Swift’s comparatively late novel (*Gulliver’s Travels* was published in 1726, when the author was 59 years old) in the context of his earlier and contemporary works, other literary sources and genres and the complex network of English and Irish politics in which Swift was, for some time at least – under Queen Anne and her Lord Treasurer Robert Harley – an important player. After the Queen’s death (1714) and the Whig supremacy under George I, Swift took up residence in Dublin as the Dean of St Patrick’s and resumed writing only in 1720. The period from 1724 onward was one of the most prolific in Swift’s life, culminating in the publication of *Gulliver’s Travels*. The introduction concludes with an assessment of the impact which *Gulliver’s Travels*, and its immediate popular success, had on Swift himself, and a brief review of the novel’s afterlife.

As David Womersley can show, the book had a long gestation period. Swift’s interest in travel writing and the discovery of far-away countries can be traced to the collective *Memoirs of the Extraordinary Life, Works, and Discoveries of Martinus Scriblerus* to which Swift had contributed since 1714. Other early works, such as *A Tale of a Tub* (1704) share the same exuberance, acerbic tone and a distinct ‘modernity’ of form with *Gulliver’s Travels*; however, both were “written to display, discredit and mortify the manifold pretensions of

modernity” (xlviif.). Even closer thematic connections can be established between *Gulliver’s Travels* and the works Swift was engaged in almost simultaneously, the already mentioned *Drapier’s Letters* and *The History of the Four Last Years of the Queen*. Swift’s satirical and sometimes bitter indictment of bad governance and corruption at court, especially in his description of Liliput in Part I and Balnibarbi in Part III, draws on his experience of the present wrongs of Ireland and the reflection on his own ambivalent engagement in politics in 1710–1714.

Womersley’s study of the sources and intertextual relations of *Gulliver’s Travels* is by no means confined to Swift’s own oeuvre. Both in the introduction and in the footnotes to the text of *Gulliver’s Travels*, there are copious references to contemporary authors such as Delarivier Manley and to classical and early modern writers ranging from Horace – an important influence on Swift who is accorded his own long note (445–447) – to Sir Thomas More, whose *Utopia* of course constitutes an important reference point for the ideal and less-than-ideal countries visited by Gulliver. The literary contextualisation of Swift’s novel offered in this edition’s various paratexts is meticulous, wide-ranging and incredibly detailed. The edition achieves a high standard as a work of reference that will help readers of Jonathan Swift’s major novel to identify even fairly obscure references.

In contrast, the section on “Gulliver’s afterlife” which concludes the introduction is quite short (cii–civ) and almost disappointing. Our attention is drawn to the novel’s immediate national success and “how quickly details of Swift’s narrative entered and circulated within [the] imaginative world” (cii) of Swift’s circle and beyond. Prompt translations, beginning with translations into Dutch, French, German (all 1727) and Italian (1729), as well as the profusion of ‘Gulliveriana’ (ancillary publications by other authors) bear witness to the novel’s success in European letters and finally its rise to an undisputed work of world literature. This success, and especially the novel’s transformation into a popular children’s book in the nineteenth century, comes with the consequence that bowdlerised editions are thrown on the market, and in particular, that the less entertaining and more ‘misanthropic’ parts III and IV are removed entirely from children’s editions (also discussed in the “Textual Introduction”, cf. 648f.). The section concludes with brief references to later writers who admired and took inspiration from *Gulliver’s Travels*, including Joseph Conrad, George Orwell, Vladimir Nabokov and Jorge Luis Borges. However, what is completely missing from this survey of the novel’s later reception are references to its adaptation into other media, such as the graphic novel – for instance Martin Rowson’s acclaimed *Gulliver’s Travels: Adapted and Updated* (2012) – and, even more importantly, film. Nor is this gap noted even in passing – as if we still

lived in the Gutenberg era where print is the only noteworthy medium of the circulation of cultural capital.

Possibly the earliest example of a film adaptation is Georges Méliès's (who is currently being rediscovered as a classical director and film pioneer) silent picture *Le Voyage de Gulliver à Lilliput et chez les géants* (1902). For a long time, Hollywood has shown an interest in the family entertainment and adventure aspect, especially of the first two parts of Swift's novel, as for example in the 1939 animated film *Gulliver's Travels* (dir. Dave Fleischer) released by Fleischer Studios who were subsequently bought up by Disney. The latest of many film adaptations is the 2010 version of *Gulliver's Travels* directed by Rob Letterman with Jack Black in the title role, in which Lemuel Gulliver is a travel writer who is sent to the Bermudas but ends up in Lilliput. The film grossed an estimated \$ 112,000,000<sup>1</sup>; while it can be seen as a further example of the novel's bowdlerisation and, perhaps, cultural debasement, it has to be acknowledged that popular film has become the most important medium for the continued reception of literary classics. The way Swift's bitterly satirical novel has been turned into pure entertainment can be criticised, but the existence of film adaptations should at least be mentioned in an edition that otherwise gives us such a complete map of Gulliver's universe.

The centrepiece of the new Cambridge *Gulliver's Travels* is the historical-critical edition of the novel's text. The copy text on which it is based is George Faulkner's 1735 Dublin edition, "a text both restored and revised" (647) in close collaboration with Swift. The first edition had been published by Benjamin Motte, a London printer and publisher, in 1726. However, as with other works, Swift engaged in a complex authorial mystification, negotiating with Motte through a chain of go-betweens (among them, John Gay and Alexander Pope) and finally sending him a copy of the original manuscript anonymously. Through these manoeuvres, Swift deprived himself of the opportunity of checking the proofs. Motte, who had purchased the manuscript for £200 (which made him, before the advent of authorial copyright, the legal owner), revised the text, in particular removing passages that might provoke repercussions. Despite the immediate success of the publication, Swift was unhappy with Motte's revisions; the 1735 edition was also designed to restore to *Gulliver's Travels* some of the bite it had lost in 1726. As all manuscript versions, including the holograph and the amanuensis's fair copy which served as the basis for Motte's edition, have been lost, Faulkner's edition, as Womersley convincingly argues, "represents Swift's final intentions for the text of *Gulliver's Travels*" (647). Ac-

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1320261/>>.

cordingly, this edition has been chosen as the copy text for the present edition. A comprehensive survey of the various eighteenth-century and later editions is given in “The History of the Text”; together with a list of authoritative editions, a historical collation which records all substantive variants in lifetime authoritative editions of *Gulliver’s Travels*, and a reprint of the title pages and frontispiece portraits of the 1726 and 1735 editions, this completes the impressive editorial apparatus. With this latest addition to the Cambridge edition of the works of Jonathan Swift, David Womersley has achieved a substantial contribution to Swift studies.

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**Rosa Karl.** *Paradoxe Paradiesschöpfung: Untersuchung zu einer Ethik und Rhetorik des Un-Vernünftigen in den Texten Percy Bysshe Shelleys.* Studien zur Englischen Romantik 9. Trier: WVT, 2011, 237 pp., € 25.50.

Rosa Karl’s book, originally a PhD thesis submitted at the University of Munich, represents an important contribution to research on Percy Bysshe Shelley, particularly in its rehabilitation of *Laon and Cythna* and in offering an integrated reading of canonic Shelley texts vis-à-vis this early and often neglected epic. Its analytical style is rigorous and ‘close’ in the sense that it follows the texts in great detail and produces a myriad of detailed observations. The overall task the book sets itself is to examine the vexed relationship of Shelley’s idealist belief in the social and political efficacy of this poetry on the one hand and his radically innovative and irreverent poetical technique on the other. Many critics have been baffled by how poetry that is so difficult to understand might be thought of as influencing people and changing society for the better. According to Rosa Karl’s intriguing suggestion, Shelley posits his texts as echo chambers of different belief systems, which are brought to bear on present political and social contexts through the reading activities of their recipients. The reader’s activity thus echoes the cavernous work undertaken by so many of Shelley’s characters (e.g. Cythna or Prometheus and Asia), who endure limbo-like captivity in a cave where they contemplate, recontextualize and ultimately rearrange the complex “network” (“Geflecht”, 105) of human semantics and thereby release the concrete, revolutionary energy latent in it. This has an unmistakably post-structuralist ring to it, and Karl indeed makes sure to point out the parallels of